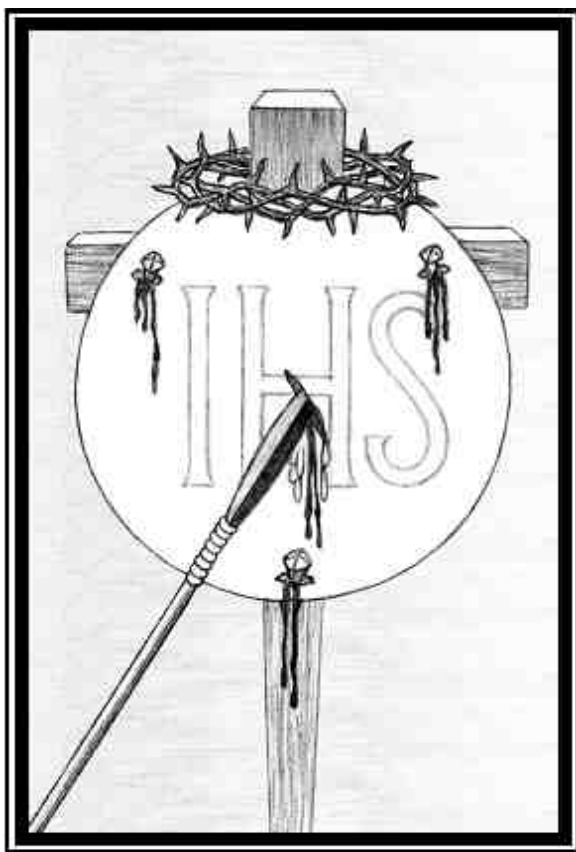


The Novus Ordo Question



SHOULD FAITHFUL CATHOLICS BOYCOTT THE NEW MASS?

Containing information and facts about the *Novus Ordo* Mass
little known to the general Catholic population

The Novus Ordo Question

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Month of Our Lady of Sorrows

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| The Novus Ordo Question | 5 |
| A Valid Mass | 6 |
| Can a Valid Mass be Faulty or Deficient?..... | 6 |
| The Limits of Papal Authority | 8 |
| The Infallibility and Indefectibility of the Church..... | 12 |
| Lawfully Disobeying the Roman Pontiff | 13 |
| Is the <i>Novus Ordo</i> Harmful?..... | 16 |
| Condemnations of the <i>Novus Ordo</i> as it is presently Offered | 18 |
| Can't I be a Good Example by Participating at the <i>Novus Ordo</i> with all Due Reverence?..... | 22 |
| The Profound Effect of <i>Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi</i> in England | 23 |
| Mysterious Similarities between the Protestant 1549 Prayer Book of the Church of England and the <i>Novus Ordo</i> | 24 |
| Fighting FOR the Church..... | 27 |
| Responses to a Reviewer's Comments..... | 29 |
| 1. Isn't it illogical to say that the <i>Novus Ordo</i> is valid and at the same time "evil" or "sacrilegious"? | 29 |
| 2. Should we be fussing over the use of the words "for all" rather than "for many" in the Consecration?..... | 30 |
| 3. Is the Society of St. Pius X in schism? | 31 |
| 4. Aren't those who refuse to follow all the teachings of Vatican II just picking and choosing like liberal "cafeteria" Catholics? | 31 |
| 5. Concerning the New Mass, isn't the only real consideration in whether the Pope approved of it (<i>Roma locuta,</i> <i>causa finita</i>)?..... | 35 |
| Final Remarks..... | 37 |
| Apologia Pro Marcel Lefebvre (by Michael Davies)..... | 39 |
| Apostolic Constitution – <i>Quo Primum</i> (St. Pius V)..... | 48 |
| The Ottaviani Intervention (<i>The Letter of Cardinals</i> <i>Ottaviani & Bacci to Pope Paul VI</i>) | Back Cover |

The Novus Ordo Question

NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR: This booklet was written initially as a letter to myself to help me reason out my gut-level feeling that I should not be attending *Novus Ordo* Masses. I showed it to others — including a respected Catholic priest — for critical feedback and consequently was asked to publish it. ~Robert T. Hart

Dear Friend in Christ,

May the peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Whatever I may write here, it is not intended to be the finality in exploring the question of the New (*Novus Ordo*) Mass. For, this is certainly not an exhaustive study and there may be much more on the subject that I have not discovered. These are simply my best current thoughts as an earnest Catholic struggling to do what is best in the eyes of God in these troubled times for the Church.

It is no new revelation to say that the vast majority of *Novus Ordo* Masses today are offensive to traditional Catholic piety and most often contain many acts of outrage, sacrilege and indifference against Our Eucharistic Lord (as represented by the cover image).¹ Yet this ongoing

¹ According to St. Thomas: “...the sin of sacrilege consists in the irreverent treatment of a sacred thing. Now reverence is due to a sacred thing by reason of its holiness: and consequently the species of sacrilege must needs be distinguished according to the different aspects of sanctity in the sacred things which are treated irreverently: for the greater the holiness ascribed to the sacred thing that is sinned against, the more grievous the sacrilege.

“Now holiness is ascribed, not only to **sacred persons**, namely, those who are consecrated to the divine worship, but also to **sacred places** and to certain other **sacred things**. ...”

St. Thomas then goes on to say that: “Among these [other sacred things] the highest place belongs to the sacraments whereby man is sanctified: chief of which is the sacrament of the Eucharist, for it contains Christ Himself. **Wherefore the sacrilege that is committed against this sacrament is the gravest of all.** The second place, after the sacraments, belongs to the vessels consecrated for the administration of the sacraments; also sacred images, and the relics of the saints, wherein the very persons of the saints, so to speak, are revered and honored. After these come things connected with the apparel of the Church and its ministers; and those things, whether movable or immovable, that are deputed to the upkeep of the ministers. And whoever sins against any one of the aforesaid incurs the crime of sacrilege” (*Summa* 81, 5; I-II, 101, 4 [Emphasis mine]).

situation raises the question as to whether I or any Catholic are under the obligation to attend the New Mass or, whether it is a *better* thing, or still more, even *obligatory*, to avoid it all together.

A Valid Mass

First of all, let us take for granted that we are speaking of valid *Novus Ordo* Masses. A valid Mass is simply any Mass in which bread and wine are actually transformed into the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that is, any Mass where transubstantiation (of both with *both* the bread and wine) takes place, regardless of what else may go on in the process. If the man offering the Mass is not ordained, if the necessary elements are not used, if the necessary words are not pronounced, transubstantiation does not take place and the Mass is not valid. Therefore, any Mass that is not valid is not a Mass at all.

It is important to note that just because a Mass is valid, does not mean that that Mass is licit. Any Catholic priest offering a Mass *against* the laws of the Church is offering an *illicit* (unlawful) Mass but it is still *valid* providing he fulfills the requirements to confect the Sacrament as noted above. An example of this would be if a Latin Rite priest offered Mass with leaven bread. Since leaven bread is legitimately used in other Catholic rites it is certainly valid matter, but it is unlawful for use in the Latin Rite. As we all know then, we see innumerable illicit Masses in our day.

Can a Valid Mass be Faulty or Deficient?

There are those who say that the *Novus Ordo*, even when offered exactly as it is written in the original Latin Missal is offensive to God. How can they say this? If the Mass was promulgated by the Pope, how can it be faulty? Fr. Paul Kramer in his front page article in the January 2005 issue of *Catholic Family News* claims the *Novus Ordo* is indeed faulty (“deficient” as he terms it) and that this is possible because it was never actually legally promulgated. In his book, *Pope Paul’s New Mass*, Michael Davies agrees that this decree “*does not promulgate anything*.”² I, myself, have read the decree entitled: PROMULGATION OF THE ROMAN MISSAL REVISED BY DECREE OF THE SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, and dated April 3, 1969. I have to agree with

² Davies Michael, *Pope Paul’s New Mass* (Vol. 3 of *The Liturgical Revolution*), p. 279. Kansas City: Angelus Press, 1980.

Fr. Kramer and Mr. Davies that nowhere in the document is the promulgation of *the New Rite of Mass* specifically prescribed albeit the decree ends with the words: “*The effective date for what we have prescribed in this Constitution shall be the First Sunday of Advent of this year, 30 November.*” Even so, I am certainly not competent enough in these matters to be able to say absolutely that, *legally*, the *Novus Ordo* was *never* promulgated. I only say that it certainly appears likely.

I believe it is also the position of the Society of St. Pius X (SSPX) as well that the *Novus Ordo* is deficient. St. Thomas Aquinas defines evil as the “*defect of the good which is naturally due*” (*malu est...defectus boni quod natum est et debet habere*). Therefore some argue that even if there is nothing positively harmful in the New Mass³, it can be condemned as evil in the sense that it deprives the faithful of the spiritual (and due) benefit they would have derived from the sublime prayers and actions of the traditional missal. Michael Davies reports that one traditional priest of the SSPX (for whom he said he has “*the very greatest respect*”) expressed this position as follows: “*Now one must not make us say what we did not say. The evil of the New Mass, its harmful character, does not consist in professing heresies, but rather in failing to profess that Catholic Faith when it should.*”⁴

What I believe this traditional priest is saying is that the Mass is supposed to portray in its prayers, actions and gestures the doctrine of the Catholic Faith because, as the ancient axiom states: *lex orandi, lex credendi*.⁵ Thus, the Church has always considered the Mass as one of the most important means of transmitting the Faith. A form of Mass then, even if valid, can be evil if it portrays something other than, or less than Catholic doctrine because it will have the tendency to cause souls (perhaps little by little) to lose their Catholic Faith. Do we not see this happening today?

³ By “*positively harmful*” we mean that no particular heresy or error is specifically manifested in the text.

⁴ Davies, Michael, *I Am With You Always*, p. 67. Long Prairie, MN: Newman Press, 1997 (second and revised edition).

⁵ Literally: The law of prayer is the law of belief — meaning: The way in which we pray determines the what we believe

The Limits of Papal Authority

So, there are those who say the New Mass is deficient of a good which is naturally due it, therefore in some way it is evil. But what if Fr. Kramer is wrong and the *Novus Ordo* was legally promulgated, how could it be deficient or evil? After all, since the Pope has universal and supreme authority over the entire Church, doesn't he have the authority to change the Mass or liturgy as he sees fit? Cardinal Ratzinger (Now Pope Benedict XVI) answers that question with a firm "No."⁶ In his book, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, Ratzinger complains that the new liturgy, the *Novus Ordo*, is a break with tradition. He says, "*In place of liturgy as the fruit of development came fabricated liturgy. We abandoned the organic, living process of growth and development over centuries, and replaced it — as in a manufacturing process — with a fabrication, a banal on-the-spot product.*" The Cardinal also states that "*After the Second Vatican Council, the impression rose that the Pope really could do anything in liturgical matters, especially if he were acting on the mandate of an ecumenical council.*" And so, "*Eventually, the idea of the givenness of the liturgy, the fact that one cannot do with it what one will, faded from the consciousness of the West.*" What we see today, then, is an exaggerated view of papal authority which is not based on the true teachings of the Church. For the Cardinal says:

*In fact, the First Vatican Council had in no way defined the Pope as an absolute monarch. On the contrary, it presented him as the guarantor of obedience to the revealed Word. The Pope's authority is bound to the Tradition of faith, and that also applies to the liturgy. It is not "manufactured" by the authorities. Even the Pope can only be a humble servant of its lawful development and abiding integrity and identity.*⁷

So, did Pope Paul VI act outside his realm of authority in "manufacturing" the *Novus Ordo* and imposing it on the Latin Church? According to the outstanding liturgist, Msgr. Klaus Gamber,

⁶ This refutes the claims of Dr. Mirus of Christendom College. In an article entitled *Pope St. Pius V and Quo Primum*, Mirus stated that the reigning Pope (and his Magisterium) is the living authority in the Church and that "*all appeals to Scripture, tradition, emotional attachment or personal preference however sound and certain these appeals appear to those who make them must ultimately bow to that living authority or cease to be Catholic.*"

⁷ Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, pp.165-6. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000.

this is evidently the case. His position is clearly captured in the book, *The Great Façade*, by authors Christopher A. Ferrara and Thomas E. Woods. In the following (lengthy) quotation taken from that book they report:⁸

[Msgr.] Gamber, a liturgist of great renown, is a scholar whose authority and credentials are disputed by no one. ... His devastating critique of the liturgical reform, The Reform of the Roman Liturgy: Its Problems and Background (English translation, 1993), for whose French-language edition Cardinal Ratzinger [now Pope Benedict XVI] wrote a laudatory preface, merits careful study. (Cardinal Ratzinger describes Msgr. Gamber as “the one scholar who, among the army of pseudo-liturgists, truly represents the liturgical thinking of the center of the Church.”)

For Gamber there was no question that the new Mass constituted a clear and tragic break with tradition, and he said so flatly. He observed that while the liturgy had evolved gradually and imperceptibly over time, “there has never actually been an actual break with Church tradition, as has happened now, and in such a frightening way, where almost everything the Church represents is being questioned.” “We can only pray and hope,” he added, “that the Roman Church will return to Tradition and allow once more the celebration of that liturgy of the Mass which is well over 1,000 years old.”⁹ Msgr. Gamber would have been baffled at

⁸ Christopher A. Ferrara & Thomas E. Woods, Jr., *The Great Façade*, pp. 169-172. Wyoming, MN: Remnant Press, 2002.

⁹ On July 7, 2007, Pope Benedict XVI issued the *motu proprio: Summorum Pontificum*, which (with certain *stated* restrictions) has made it clear that all Latin Rite priests are free to offer the Traditional Latin Mass because it was “*never abrogated*.” Thus today we have some hope that we may start to see at least some small beginning to that “*return to Tradition*.” Many Catholics have known for years that all Latin Rite priests were free to offer the Traditional Latin Mass because the Apostolic Constitution: *Quo Primum* of Pope St. Pius V has never been revoked and is still, therefore, fully in force. Thus, even the conditions or restrictions mentioned in Benedict XVI’s *motu proprio* are not licit; for, *Quo Primum* makes it clear: “...by these presents [this law], in virtue of Our Apostolic authority, We grant and concede in perpetuity that, for the chanting or reading of the Mass in any church whatsoever, this Missal is hereafter to be followed absolutely, without any scruple of conscience or fear of incurring any penalty, judgment, or censure, and may freely and lawfully be used” (see full document p. 48).

Interestingly, Fr. Paul Kramer stated at the 6th Annual *Catholic Family News Conference* (Nov. 2000): “...regardless of *Quo Primum*, it had been a well established teaching of the Catholic Faith that the Roman rite cannot be trashed and replaced with a new rite.” This is because: “It was the Council of Trent that

the anti-intellectual position of the neo-Catholic,¹⁰ whereby radical novelty conforms with tradition as long as ecclesiastical authority says it does, despite all evidence to the contrary and in spite of the very demands of logic itself.

Here is how Gamber viewed our present situation:

"Today, those who out of a sense of personal belief hold firm to what until recently had been strictly prescribed by the Roman Church are treated with condescension by many of their own brothers. They face problems if they continue to nurture the very rite in which they were brought up and to which they have been consecrated...

"On the other side, the progressives who see little or no value in tradition can do almost no wrong, and are usually given the benefit of the doubt, even when they defend opinions which clearly contradict Catholic teaching.

"To add to this spiritual confusion, we are also dealing with the satiated state of mind of modern man, who, living in our consumer

solemnly declared...in Session 7 Canon 13 on the 'Sacraments in General:' 'If anyone says that the received and approved rites customarily used in the Catholic Church for the solemn administration of the Sacraments can be changed into other new rites by any pastor in the Church whosoever, let him be anathema.'" And: "When we look at *Quo Primum*, we see that Pope St. Pius V refers to the Roman rite as that rite 'which has been handed down in the Roman Church.' He was clearly designating that the rite in the Missal that he codified is **precisely that rite** which is the customary rite, 'the received and approved rite customarily used in the solemn administration of the Sacraments'" [Trent, Sess. 7, Cn. 13].

On the other hand, the *Novus Ordo* can never be considered a rite that was "received," or "handed down" to us from those who came before us. For, as Ratzinger declared and is self-evident, it is a "fabricated liturgy," something "manufactured," a "banal on-the-spot product."

¹⁰ The term "neo-Catholic" is used in *The Great Façade* to describe the large body of so-called "conservatives" that has arisen in the Church since the Second Vatican Council who erroneously "maintain that every single one of the postconciliar novelties — including such things as altar girls — must be accepted and defended as legitimate 'developments' of Catholic Tradition, even though they are utterly without precedent in the history of the Church. The one and only test that neo-Catholics recognize for the legitimacy of these 'developments' of Catholic Tradition is that they were approved by the conciliar Popes. ... The neo-Catholic...recognizes no real qualitative distinction between the Pope's doctrinal teaching and his legislation, commands, administration or public ecclesiastical policy. In essence, whatever the Pope says or does in the exercise of his office is ipso facto 'traditional' and incontestable by the Pope's subjects" (p.19).

society, approaches anything that is holy with a complete lack of understanding and has no appreciation of the concept of religion, let alone of his own sinful state. For them, God, if they believe in Him at all, exists only as their 'friend.'

"At this critical juncture, the traditional Roman rite, more than one thousand years old and until now the heart of the Church, was destroyed."

The authors of *The Great Façade* continue:

Gamber in fact went even further than merely stating that the new liturgy constituted a radical break with tradition — that much should be obvious, he thought. More interesting was the question, which Gamber dared to pose, of whether the Pope in fact possessed the authority to change the traditional rite of Mass in such a wholesale manner.

According to Gamber, "It most certainly is not the function of the Holy See to introduce Church reforms. The duty of the Pope is...to watch over the traditions of the Church — her dogmatic, moral, and liturgical traditions." This is a critical point: the Pope's first duty is to preserve what has been handed down, not to introduce novelty or to discard what is ancient and venerable. The fundamentally conservative role of the papal office, as we note elsewhere in this book, was described specifically at the First Vatican Council: it is the Pope's task to guard the *depositum fidei*, not to change or augment it.

Gamber concludes: "Since there is no document that specifically assigns to the Apostolic See the authority to change, let alone to abolish the traditional liturgical rite; and since, furthermore, it can be shown that not a single predecessor of Pope Paul VI has ever introduced major changes to the Roman liturgy, the assertion that the Holy See has the authority to change the liturgical rite would appear to be debatable to say the least." As we have already noted in *The Spirit of the Liturgy* (2000), no less an authority than Cardinal Ratzinger] to all intents and purposes endorses this view. "The authority of the Pope," Ratzinger concludes, "is not unlimited; it is at the service of Sacred Tradition."

After having presented Gamber's view, the authors go on to present Cardinal Stickler's important and strikingly similar analysis of the current crisis in the liturgy:

Alfons Cardinal Stickler, the retired prefect of the Vatican library and archives, who served as a *peritus* on Vatican II's Liturgy Commission [concur]. After noting that he had never called into question the validity of the *Novus Ordo*, the Cardinal adds **that the juridical question was another matter**. Basing his judgment on "my intensive work with the

medieval canonists” the Cardinal points out that there are certain things so essential to the life of the Church that “even the Pope has no right of disposal” over them, as indeed the Catechism teaches (CCC 1124, 1125). He suggests that the liturgy should be considered among these essential things. [Emphasis mine]

Cardinal Stickler has distinguished between the two rites by noting that while what he calls the *corpus traditionum* was alive in the old Mass, the new is plainly “contrived.” He endorsed Gamber’s contention that, in the Cardinal’s words, “today we stand before the ruins of a 2,000-year tradition, and...it is to be feared that, as a result of countless reforms, the tradition is in such a vandalized mess that it may be difficult to revive it.”

So, Cardinal Ratzinger, Msgr. Gamber and Cardinal Stickler all tell us that it is more than just debatable to say the Pope acted outside his authority in imposing on the Latin Church a New Rite of Mass which is a complete break with tradition while discarding the 1000+ year old Traditional Latin Rite. This is something the Pope is simply not supposed to do. But what are the faithful to do when a Pope acts in such a manner? Before trying to answer this question, let us learn a little more about what is and is not guaranteed free from error within the Church.

The Infallibility and Indefectibility of the Church

As Michael Davies explains: “It is the unanimous opinion of theologians of repute (approved authors) that the Church is infallible in her discipline and general practice (including the liturgy), at least in all that is truly commanded by the universal Church. They are equally unanimous in agreeing that in particular laws not destined for the universal Church there can be error. The infallibility of universal discipline is taught by Tanquerey, Pesch, and Hervé.”¹¹

From this Mr. Davies rightly concludes that the Church therefore, by the attribute of her *Indefectibility* could never give her children a liturgy or sacraments that are harmful and not in conformity with the Faith. He says that this “*indefectibility does not guarantee that the new law will be the most perfect possible, or even opportune or appropriate, but only that it will be free from all error implicit or explicit in matters of faith or morals, and consequently cannot harm the spiritual life of the faithful by their observing what the law prescribes.* The canonists Werz-Widal explain: ‘The Pontiffs are infallible in the elaboration of universal

¹¹ *I Am With You Always*, p. 26.

*laws concerning the ecclesiastical discipline, such that these can never establish anything that might be contrary to faith and morals even if they do not attain the supreme degree of prudence.”*¹²

Referring to the *Novus Ordo*, Davies explains that this indefectibility “*applies only to what is mandated or authorized for universal use, and cannot, therefore, be applied to any vernacular celebration. ...it is only the Latin [Novus Ordo] Missal as a universal disciplinary law to which the doctrine of indefectibility can be applied. (...) The indefectibility does not apply to deviations from the universal law represented by that Missal. Permissions, concessions, exceptions, and indults can be imprudent or even harmful. Indefectibility guarantees no more than that the Pope will never command or authorize for universal use a practice that is intrinsically harmful to the faith.*”¹³

Mr. Davies concludes therefore that the *Novus Ordo* in the original Latin Missal, by reason of the Church’s *indefectibility*, cannot contain errors or be harmful to the faithful. But is this conclusion perfectly reasonable? What if contrary to what Fr. Kramer asserts (and Michael Davies agrees!), the *Novus Ordo* was never legally promulgated? If it wasn’t actually promulgated, then there can be no guarantee of indefectibility, and thus no guarantee that the New Mass does not contain elements harmful to the faith. But even if Fr. Kramer is wrong, we still have the assessment of Ratzinger, Gamber and Stickler who say the Pope acted outside his authority. Since the Pope acted in a manner which is truly outside his authority then he acted in an illicit manner and surely in such a case his action would not be covered with that guarantee of indefectibility of which Mr. Davies speaks. The same would be true if the Pope were to make a solemn declaration on a matter of science (outside the realm of faith and morals). Since such a declaration would be outside his realm of authority there would be no guarantee that he was right in the matter. Thus, Mr. Davies’ conclusion is incorrect, and there exists no guarantee that the *Novus Ordo* is not harmful to the faithful.

Lawfully Disobeying the Roman Pontiff

The reputed theologians of the Church (approved authors) also recognized that a Pope who acted in precisely such a manner with the

¹² Ibid., p. 29.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 58-9.

liturgy would be acting outside his authority *and could thus bring harm to the Church*. Therefore, they obviously recognized that the guarantee of indefectibility did not apply in such a case. This is certain, for they state that in such circumstances it is lawful to *disobey* the Pontiff. They could only say this if his action was potentially harmful. The eminent theologian Francis Suarez (along with Cajetan & Torquemada) stated:

And in this second way the Pope could be schismatic, if he were unwilling to be in normal union with the whole body of the Church, as would occur if he attempted to excommunicate the whole Church, or, as both Cajetan and Torquemada observe, if he wished to overturn the rites of the Church based on Apostolic Tradition....¹⁴ If [the Pope]...gives an order contrary to right customs, he should not be obeyed; if he attempts to do something manifestly opposed to justice and the common good, it will be lawful to resist him; if he attacks by force, by force he can be repelled, with a moderation appropriate to a just defense.” [Emphasis mine]

Incidentally the old Latin Mass is based on Apostolic Tradition as the XXII Session of the Council of Trent teaches: *“For it [the Mass] consists partly of the very words of the Lord, partly of the traditions of the Apostles, and also of pious regulations of holy pontiffs.”* Cardinal Ottaviani (head of the Holy Office) and Cardinal Bacci tried desperately to warn Pope Paul VI that his *Novus Ordo Missæ* should not be promulgated because it dangerously strayed from this basis. In their letter to the Pope they stated that the New Mass *“represents as a whole and in detail a striking departure from the Catholic theology of the Mass as it was formulated in Session XXII of the Council of Trent, which, by fixing definitely the “canons” of the rite,*

¹⁴ *In effect*, the traditional Latin-rite Mass was almost completely overturned with the introduction of the *Novus Ordo*. We can find reason then to resist Pope Paul VI’s liturgical revolution. Nevertheless, according to Church teaching, no one is permitted to privately judge the Sovereign Pontiff; therefore, we may not judge Paul VI a schismatic Pope. Furthermore, as Christopher Ferrara (co-author of *The Great Facade*) has pointed out, Pope Paul VI did not “ever actually ‘legally overturn the rites of the Church based on apostolic tradition.’ In appearing to promulgate the New Mass, Pope Paul never legally abrogated the traditional Mass.” Any Latin-rite priest still remains free to offer the Traditional Latin Mass. (“*Opposing the Sedevacantist Enterprise*,” end note 20, *Catholic Family News*, August 2005.) Note that Mr. Ferrara’s choice of words: “*In appearing to promulgate the New Mass*,” would seem to indicate that he too believes that the *Novus Ordo* was never legally promulgated.

erected an insurmountable barrier against any heresy which might attack the integrity of the mystery."¹⁵

St. Robert Bellarmine, a doctor of the Church, also agrees that it can be lawful at times to resist the reigning Pope:

Just as it is licit to resist the Pontiff who attacks the body, so also it is licit to resist him who attacks souls, or who disturbs the civil order, or above all, him who tries to destroy the Church. I say that it is licit to resist him by not doing what he orders and by impeding the execution of his will.

These great men of the Church were not simply offering their own (highly respectable) opinions. Rather, their teaching is based on Church teaching. Pope Innocent III in his Bull *De Consuetudine* stated: "*It is necessary to obey a Pope in all things as long as he does not go against the universal customs of the Church, but **should he go against the universal customs of the Church, he need not be followed.***"¹⁶ [Emphasis mine]

It is almost certain that Pope Innocent III made this important statement drawing on the Second Council of Nicea. In recent history, Pope St. Pius X quoted the significant teaching of that Council in his encyclical *Pascendi*:

*But for Catholics nothing will remove the authority of the Second Council of Nicea, where it condemns those "**who dare, after the impious fashion of heretics, to deride the ecclesiastical traditions, to invent novelties of some kind... or endeavor by malice or craft to overthrow any one of the legitimate traditions of the Catholic Church**" wherefore the Roman Pontiffs, Pius IV and Pius IX, ordered the insertion in the profession of faith of the following declaration: "I most firmly admit and embrace the apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions and other observances and constitutions of the Church. [Emphasis mine]*

We see, therefore, that overthrowing the *rites of the Church* and *universal customs* is considered something out-of-bounds even for the Pope. We also see that a Pope can act in a manner harmful to the Church; and if he does, it is lawful to disobey him. Therefore, it

¹⁵ The entire letter can be found on the back cover page of this booklet.

¹⁶ The actual Bull *De Consuetudine* appears no longer to be extant. Yet this text of the Bull was found quoted in the writings of the eminent 15th-century theologian of the Council of Florence, Juan Cardinal Torquemada, in his *Summa de Ecclesia* [1489].

would seem that the *Novus Ordo*, even in the *original* Latin Missal does not enjoy the protection of indefectibility and thus *could be* harmful to the Church and the faithful. It also seems quite clear that we are within-bounds in disobeying in this matter. That is, it appears perfectly consistent with Catholic teaching that priests (like the those of the SSPX) have the right — and perhaps the duty — to refuse to offer the *Novus Ordo* Missæ and to do what is necessary to preserve the Traditional Latin Mass, and that the faithful also have the right — and perhaps even the duty — to respectfully refuse to participate at the *Novus Ordo*.

Is the *Novus Ordo* Harmful?

Having come to this conclusion, there remains yet another question to be answered: Even if the *Novus Ordo* can be said not to enjoy the protection of indefectibility, that does not *necessarily* mean it actually is harmful. It *could be* that even though in this instance Pope Paul VI apparently did not enjoy the guarantee of indefectibility, he nevertheless did succeed in giving the Church a New Rite of Mass that contains no harmful elements. It *could be*, as Michael Davies claims (against the opinion of Cardinals Ottaviani & Bacci [see above] and of the SSPX) that the *Novus Ordo* in its original Latin form contains nothing dangerous to the Faith (Mr. Davies makes this claim, it must be remembered, *solely* on the basis of it being impossible because of the supposed “guaranteed” *indefectibility*).

Yet, if we look into the matter, we find there are reasons to believe (just as Ottaviani and Bacci show in their letter and in the critical study accompanying it), that the *Novus Ordo* is harmful even in its original form. To point out just one instance where the original Latin *Novus Ordo* Missal is harmful to the Faith, let us take a look at the “Prayer over the Gifts” which now takes the place of the traditional Offertory and which reads:

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become for us the bread of life.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become our spiritual drink.

Immediately after these prayers the priest asks the people to pray that the Sacrifice be acceptable to God. These new prayers appear to

all to indicate that what we are offering to God *in sacrifice* at Mass is simply bread and wine, whereas the truth is that the Mass is the offering of God to God — the unbloody renewal of the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary 2000 years ago. It appears in the New Mass that we are just offering the substance of bread and wine so that God can transform them into *the bread of life* and *our spiritual drink* for us to consume at Communion. Considering the long-standing principle *lex orandi, lex credendi* (i.e. the way we pray determines the way we believe), the false impression given by these new prayers of the *Novus Ordo* certainly is a danger to the Faith.

This particular misconception was exactly my own experience. While growing up I always attended the *Novus Ordo* weekly (and often even daily). I also frequently served as an altar boy. I can state for myself that during all that time I had no idea that the Mass was the Sacrifice of Christ offered to God. It was only after my conversion experience in my early twenties — when I started to do some deeper research on the Catholic Faith — that I learned this vital truth about the Mass. I can also say that I heard an honest, but misinformed priest once say how remarkable it is that we offer to God the tiny sacrifice of some bread and wine and He in turn gives us his Son. But again, this is not the exchange that takes place. Rather, we offer *Jesus Himself* to the Father, and the fruit of *this Sacrifice* is the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion.

In contrast to the “Prayer over the Gifts” of the New Mass, the traditional Offertory prayers read:

Accept, O holy Father, almighty and eternal God, this unspotted host, which I, Thy unworthy servant, offer unto Thee, my living and true God, for my innumerable sins, offenses, and negligences, and for all here present...

We offer unto Thee, O Lord, the chalice of salvation, humbly begging of thy mercy that it may rise before Thy divine majesty with a pleasing fragrance, for our salvation and that of all the world.

Here we notice that what we are offering to God is never referred to as bread or wine, but as the *unspotted host*¹⁷ and the *chalice of salvation*. This infers beforehand, the transformation which will take place at the consecration (transubstantiation) and which makes the offerings worthy to be offered to God.

It is more than just interesting to note that the Protestant Reformers were quick to rid their services of these traditional Offertory prayers. Michael Davies explains:

*The Reformers swept away these prayers not because they were not primitive [found only as early as the 14th Century in the Roman Ordo]; not because they anticipated the Consecration (Luther was the only one among them who accepted anything resembling a consecration in the Catholic sense); but because of their specifically sacrificial terminology. Anything that hinted of sacrifice was anathema to the Protestant Reformers. Luther himself referred to “all that abomination called the Offertory, and from this point almost everything stinks of oblation” (Cranmer’s Godly Order, p. 101). The excuse put forward by the Reformers was that they were later additions, and they were returning to primitive practice.*¹⁸

Mr. Davies goes on to point out that these prayers, having been attacked by Protestants “from a doctrinal standpoint” were now of utmost importance. Their removal could only compromise Catholic doctrine. But with the Church’s new orientation of (false) ecumenism since Vatican II, it was necessary to remove them in the New Mass “together with other prayers equally unacceptable to Protestants” since they were “a stumbling block to unity.”¹⁹

Condemnations of the *Novus Ordo* as it is presently Offered

After having said all that, even if some could find a way to still argue that the *Novus Ordo* — as in the original Latin Missal — is not harmful to the Faith (and I am not sure how), let us be aware that the *Novus Ordo* in its original form is next to impossible to find. It is far rarer to find than even the Traditional Latin Mass. In virtually all the *Novus Ordo* Masses that are available to the faithful today a faulty

¹⁷ The word “host” means “victim.”

¹⁸ Michael Davies, *The New Mass*, p. 44. Kansas City: Angelus Press, 1985.

¹⁹ Ibid.

vernacular translation (at least in the English language) is used, the altar is replaced by a table, the priest faces the people, Communion is given in the hand, girls are serving on the altar, lay men and women are distributing Holy Communion and the music (often accompanied by the annoying piano or guitar and in which we often sing about how holy and special we are to God) is simply horrific. These practices — which are not “*mandated or even mentioned*” in the Latin Missal of the *Novus Ordo* — Michael Davies states are “*certainly harmful*.”²⁰ Mr. Davies can say this with confidence because many of these practices have been previously condemned.

Concerning Mass in the vernacular (even a perfect translation), the Council of Trent declared in Canon 10 of Session XXII:

*If any one saith, that the rite of the Roman Church, according to which a part of the canon and the words of consecration are pronounced in a low tone, is to be condemned; or, that the **mass ought to be celebrated in the vernacular only**; or, that water ought not to be mixed with the wine that is to be offered in the chalice, for that is contrary to the institution of Christ; **let him be anathema**.* [All Emphases mine, here and to the next subheading]

We also read in Pope Pius VI’s Apostolic Constitution *Auctorem Fidei* (1794), against the illicit Synod of Pistoia, that among the many errors condemned was:

*The proposition of the Synod by which it shows itself eager to remove the cause through which, in part, there has been induced forgetfulness of the principles relating to the order of liturgy, ‘**by recalling it [the liturgy] to greater simplicity of rites, by expressing it in the vernacular language or by uttering it in a loud voice**,’ as if the present order the liturgy, received and approved by the Church, had emanated in some part from the forgetfulness of the principles by which it should be regulated.*

Pope Pius VI condemned this proposition as: “*rash, offensive to pious ears, insulting to the Church, favorable to the charges of heretics....*”

We should also note that in the same document, Pius VI also condemned:

The proposition asserting that ‘it would be against apostolic practice and the plans of God unless easier ways were prepared for people to

²⁰ *I Am With You Always*, pp. 58-9.

unite their voice with that of the whole Church'; if understood to signify introducing **the use of popular language to the order prescribed for the celebration of the mysteries.**

This proposition he declared was: "*false, rash, disturbing to the order prescribed of the celebration of the mysteries, **easily productive of evil.***"

Far more recently, Pope Pius XII, in *Mediator Dei*, and Pope John XXIII, in *Veterum Sapientia*, reiterated the importance of retaining the customary Latin in the liturgy. Pius XII called it "*a manifest and beautiful sign of unity as well as an effective antidote for any corruption of doctrine.*"

Concerning the use of a table rather than the traditional altar, we read in Pope Pius XII's encyclical, *Mediator Dei* (62):

*...it is neither wise nor laudable to reduce everything to antiquity by every possible device. Thus, to cite some instances, one would be **straying from the straight path were he to wish the altar restored to its primitive tableform**; were he to want black excluded as a color for the liturgical vestments; were he to forbid the use of sacred images and statues in Churches; were he to order the crucifix so designed that the divine Redeemer's body shows no trace of His cruel sufferings; and lastly were he to disdain and reject polyphonic music or singing in parts, even where it conforms to regulations issued by the Holy See.*

Incidentally, Pope Pius XII also stated in the same encyclical (63 & 64):

*...obviously unwise and mistaken is the zeal of one who in matters liturgical would go back to the rites and usage of antiquity, discarding the new patterns introduced by disposition of **divine Providence** to meet the changes of circumstances and situation.*²¹ ***This way of acting bids fair***

²¹ "...unwise and mistaken [would it be to discard] the new patterns introduced by disposition of divine Providence to meet the changes of circumstances and situation." These words of Pope Pius XII can in no wise be applied to the introduction of the New Mass of Pope Paul VI. Pius XII here is speaking of the organic changes and growth that have taken place in the traditional Latin Mass over the centuries. For the most part, these changes have consisted of additions which were inserted into the Mass to counter the various heresies that have arisen. For instance, the Last Gospel (taken from the first chapter of the Gospel of St. John) was introduced into the Mass to counter heresies that denied the Divinity of Christ. Keep in mind that the *Novus Ordo* was a complete break from this organic process, made with the stated intention of going back to the supposedly purer "*rites and usage of antiquity.*"

to revive the exaggerated and senseless antiquarianism to which the illegal Council of Pistoia gave rise. It likewise attempts to reinstate a series of errors which were responsible for the calling of that meeting as well as for those resulting from it, with grievous harm to souls, and which the Church, the ever watchful guardian of the ‘deposit of faith’ committed to her charge by her divine Founder, had every right and reason to condemn.²² For perverse designs and ventures of this sort tend to paralyze and weaken that process of sanctification by which the sacred liturgy directs the sons of adoption to their Heavenly Father of their souls’ salvation.

Finally, we also find that the use of so-called “altar girls” was condemned by three different Popes. In his Encyclical *Al latae Sunt* (July 26, 1755, Sec. 29), Pope Benedict XIV declared:

*Pope Galesius in his 9th Letter (Chap. 26) to the Bishops of Lucania condemned the **evil practice** which had been introduced of women serving the priest at the celebration of Mass. Since this **abuse** had spread to the Greeks, Innocent IV strictly forbade it in his letter to the bishop of Tusculum: ‘Women should not dare to serve at the altar; they should be altogether refused this ministry.’ We too have forbidden this practice in the same words....*

I ask, how does an “evil practice” suddenly become something beneficial to the Church as Pope John Paul II indicated in his September 3, 1995 Angelus Address? Let us remember (with all due respect) that the same John Paul, fifteen years earlier, upheld the traditional teaching and condemned the use of female servers in his 1980 Instruction *Inestimabile Donum* (18).

We can clearly see from our vantage point today that the Popes of history were right in condemning the many innovations now approved in some manner for the *Novus Ordo* liturgy. As was said above, *lex orandi, lex credendi*. And so, with the banal prayers and gestures, the upbeat music, the genuflections replaced by bows, the women with their unveiled heads, the immodest and slovenly dress, the laypersons (even females) distributing Holy Communion, and the faithful receiving in their hands while standing upright, our worship is certainly telling us that we are NOT there to offer DIVINE WORSHIP to ALMIGHTY GOD and that we DO NOT believe that tiny white Host is the living Body of JESUS CHRIST, the SECOND PERSON OF THE BLESSED

²² Noted in the original text: Cf. Pius VI, Constitution *Auctorem fidei*, August 28, 1794, nn. 31-34, 39, 62, 66, 69-74.

TRINITY. Polls tell us that some 70% of practicing Catholics in the USA no longer believe the Church's teaching on the Eucharist. I wonder what percentage would be able to tell us that the Mass is the renewed offering of the one Sacrifice of Christ if they were asked.

And then, what feeling does a genuinely pious or devout Catholic have when entering a typical parish today? Does he feel at home? Does he feel everything is ordered toward the worship of Almighty God as it should be? Does he feel a certain unity with the others present with him in the church? And does he experience that otherworldly atmosphere guarded by a profound silence that for ages has been the mark of our Catholic sanctuaries, and that has so effectively aided souls in raising their minds and hearts to God and to the things eternal? Or rather, more often than not, does he not feel like a stranger and out of place, and as one in the church of another religion?

Can't I be a Good Example by Participating at the *Novus Ordo* with all Due Reverence?

So, should I attend the *Novus Ordo* liturgy? Many have told me that I can go and be a good example to others by my personal reverence, but is that a satisfactory answer? It seems to me from the clear points made above, as well as from the abundantly bad fruits of the New Mass, that objectively the *Novus Ordo* is a danger to the Faith. I may feel that my faith is strong and that I won't be harmed by attending it; but who is left unaffected? We are social creatures and we like to get along with others. How easily do we make compromises out of human respect! And, by sitting in the pew and silently watching Our Lord in the Eucharist being mistreated over and over won't we soon become somewhat immune to the *enormity* of the outrages and offenses committed against Him in his own house by his own people? Are we not taught that silence can be a sin if it is seen as complying, participating or approving of the wrong being done? Will we not have to answer to God for this sin of silence?

We must consider then, the effect we will have on those around us. If a priest in his clerics were to frequent a sleazy bar for no other reason than to simply have a glass of beer, he would be a scandal to his neighbor though objectively, in just having a beer, he is doing nothing wrong. This priest might say he does this to be a good example of moderation in drink. Yet anyone can clearly see that in reality he is only giving scandal. If others view us as devout

Catholics, surely they will watch our example. If they see us silently sitting through these outrages against Our Lord week after week, surely they will think all is fine in the liturgy and that Our Lord is well pleased with what is going on in his church. In reality, their Catholic Faith is in a position of danger when attending the *Novus Ordo*. Our example in attending these types of Masses, therefore, can bring harm to others.

The Profound Effect of *Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi* in England

In England, during the reign of the boy king, Edward VI, Archbishop Thomas Cranmer published his 1549 Prayer Book, which first brought the English away from the Catholic Rite of Mass.²³ By law, the priests of England were required to use this Prayer Book in place of the Traditional Mass. The Prayer Book was full of deliberate ambiguities. For those who wanted, it could be interpreted in a Catholic sense, but it could also be interpreted in a very Protestant sense. Some of the more orthodox minded priests (*i.e.* Bishop Stephen Gardiner) used this Prayer Book with the intention of offering Holy Mass as understood by the Catholic Church. Even so, as history shows, the overall effect of the Prayer Book was the destruction of the Catholic doctrine of Faith in England. Monsignor Hughes points out in his book, *The Reformation in England*, that the introduction of the Prayer Book meant a new religion was being introduced to replace the old:

*This prayer book of 1549 was as clear a sign as a man might desire that a doctrinal revolution was intended and that it was, indeed, already in progress. Once these new sacramental rites, for example, had become the habit of the English people the substance of the doctrinal reformation, victorious now in northern Europe, would have transformed England also. All but insensibly, as years went by, the beliefs enshrined in the old, and now disused rites, and kept alive by these rites in men's minds and affections would disappear — without the need of any systematic missionary effort to preach them down.*²⁴ [Emphasis mine]

²³ Earlier, in 1534, by his *Act of Supremacy*, King Henry VIII usurped the authority of the Pope by making himself the head of the Church in England. In doing this *he left the liturgy alone*. Consequently, the English people, though in schism, remained orthodox in belief.

²⁴ Cited in: Davies Michael, *Cranmer's Godly Order* (Vol. 1 of *The Liturgical Revolution*), p. 289. Ft. Collins, CO: Roman Catholic Books, 1995.

In his Bull, *Apostolicae Curæ*, Pope Leo XIII states that the Anglican Reformers “knew only too well the intimate bond which unites faith and worship, “*lex credendi*” and “*lex supplicandi*”; and so, under the pretext of restoring the liturgy to its primitive form, they corrupted it in many respects to bring it into accord with the errors of the innovators.”²⁵ And the Bishops of the Province of Westminster, in *A Vindication of the Bull “Apostolicae Curæ”* (1898) state that “if the First Prayer Book of Edward VI [1549] is compared with the [Catholic] Missal, sixteen omissions can be detected of which the evident purpose was to eliminate the idea of sacrifice.” These bishops went on to state:

*They must not omit or reform anything in those forms which immemorial tradition has bequeathed to us. For such an immemorial usage, whether or not it has in the course of ages incorporated superfluous accretions, must, in the estimation of those who believe in a divinely guarded visible Church, at least to have retained whatever is necessary; so that in adhering rigidly to the rite handed down to us we can always feel secure; whereas, if we omit or change anything, we may perhaps be abandoning just that element which is essential. And this sound method is that which the Catholic Church has always followed... . That in earlier times local churches were permitted to add new prayers and ceremonies is acknowledged.... But that they were allowed to subtract prayers and ceremonies in previous use, and even to remodel the existing rites in the most drastic manner, is a proposition for which we know of no historical foundation, and which appears to us absolutely incredible. Hence Cranmer, in taking this unprecedented course, acted, in our opinion, with the most inconceivable rashness.*²⁶

Mysterious Similarities between the Protestant 1549 Prayer Book of the Church of England and the *Novus Ordo*

If we compare the changes that were made to the Traditional Catholic Mass by Cranmer in producing his 1549 Prayer Book with the changes made in producing the *Novus Ordo Missæ*, we may be shocked to discover that they are strikingly similar! In his book, *Pope Paul’s New Mass*, Michael Davies clearly maps out these similarities. The following partial list was derived from Mr. Davies analysis:²⁷

Referenced as: Hughes, P., *The Reformation in England* (3 Vol.), Vol. 2, p. 111. London, 1950.

²⁵ Cited in *Ibid.*, p. 104.

²⁶ Cited in *Ibid.*, p. 109-110.

²⁷ *Pope Paul’s New Mass*, pp. 513-20.

- The Traditional Catholic Mass is offered in Latin. Both the 1549 Prayer Book and the *Novus Ordo* (for the most part) are in the vernacular.
- Much of the Traditional Mass was offered inaudibly. The 1549 Prayer Book and the *Novus Ordo* are both audible in their entirety. (As with the change from Latin to the vernacular, the change to an entirely audible form of worship takes away from the *mystery* aspect of the Sacrifice offered to the Almighty. The *mysterious* is then replaced with the idea that everything is done not for God, but *for the people*, and thus must be plainly understood by all.)
- The Traditional Mass was celebrated on an altar with the priest facing God (*ad orientem*). The 1549 Prayer Book and the *Novus Ordo* are celebrated on a table with the priest facing the people (*ad populum*). Incidentally, the use of an altar stone containing sacred relics is no longer required in the *Novus Ordo*.
- The Roman Canon of the Traditional Mass was abolished by Cranmer. In the *Novus Ordo* it is retained as an option. At least one of the other options, Eucharistic Prayer II, with its lack of clearly Catholic terminology concerning sacrifice and Real Presence, can be interpreted in such a way that it is considered acceptable by some Protestants.
- The Traditional Formula for Consecration was considerably modified in the 1549 Prayer Book. The *Novus Ordo* incorporated the most important of these modifications.
- In the Traditional Mass, Holy Communion was distributed to the laity only under the form of bread. This preserved (against certain reformers) the Catholic doctrine that Christ is present whole and entire under either form alone. Both the 1549 Prayer Book and the *Novus Ordo* allow the laity to receive Communion under both forms.
- In the Traditional Mass, Holy Communion is received on one's knees, on the tongue, and from the sacred hands of a priest. The 1549 Prayer Book retained all three of these practices. But in Cranmer's 1552 rite, Communion was received in the hand to signify that the bread was just ordinary bread and the priest was no different than the layman. The *Novus Ordo* Mass has

“outcranmered Cranmer” here allowing communicants not only to receive Communion in the hand, but also to receive it standing. Still more, in the *Novus Ordo*, the lay-people themselves are allowed to take the role of the priest and distribute Communion!

- The Traditional Mass began with the Psalm *Judica me* unacceptable to Protestants in virtue of its reference to the “altar of God.” In both the 1549 Prayer Book and the *Novus Ordo* this Psalm has been suppressed. The Traditional Mass contains numerous prayers frequently referring to sacrifice. In the 1549 Prayer Book and the *Novus Ordo* the sacrificial language has either been completely removed or is seriously inadequate.
- Finally, though Mr. Davies did not include it, we may also note that both the 1549 Prayer Book and the *Novus Ordo* suppressed many of the signs of reverence such as the frequent genuflections and Signs of the Cross found in the Traditional Mass.

Interestingly, Anglican Bishop Moorman, an observer at the Second Vatican Council noted: “*In reading the schema on the Liturgy, and in listening to the debate on it, I could not help thinking that, if the Church of Rome went on improving the Missal and Breviary long enough, they would one day invent the Book of Common Prayer [i.e. the 1549 Prayer Book].*”²⁸

As noted above, in *The Reformation in England*, Msgr. Hughes recognized that in fact, the 1549 Prayer Book was a “*doctrinal revolution*” designed to change the beliefs of the people “*without the need of any systematic missionary effort to preach them down.*” Can we not see then that similarly, the imposing of the *Novus Ordo* Missæ on the entire Latin Church is “*as clear a sign as a man might desire that a doctrinal revolution is intended and that it is, indeed, already in progress*”? Indeed, a study of Mr. Davies trilogy, *The Liturgical Revolution*, leaves one completely convinced that this is, indeed, the case.

In *Cranmer’s Godly Order*, Davies cites a number of Catholic historians and bishops (not to mention Pope Leo XIII) who “*condemn*” the 1549 Prayer Book “*as unacceptable because of the serious omissions from the traditional Mass. The omissions were designed to make it possible to interpret the new rite in a manner consonant with a*

²⁸ *Pope Paul’s New Mass*, p. 257.

denial of Catholic teaching on sacrifice and Real Presence. The fact that the service did not contain formal heresy or explicit denial of Catholic doctrine is considered to be irrelevant. What is not affirmed is considered to be denied.”²⁹ With the omissions in the *Novus Ordo* being of the same nature and so similar in scope to that found in 1549 Prayer Book, how can we come to any conclusion other than that it, like Cranmer’s Prayer Book, is harmful to the Catholic Faith and should also be condemned? As the SSPX priest cited at the beginning of this study stated: “*The evil of the New Mass, its harmful character, does not consist in professing heresies, but rather in failing to profess that Catholic Faith when it should.*” As it is said: **Those who do not know history are bound to repeat it.**

Fighting FOR the Church

To conclude then, it seems the best thing we can do to get the Church back on track in her liturgy and to restore the Catholic Faith of her children is to join those who refuse to participate in the *Novus Ordo* liturgy. We should boycott the New Mass. If we keep participating at it, we show by our action that we consider the *Novus Ordo* to be something *good, acceptable* and *worthy* to be attended. Even if we say that we prefer the Traditional Mass and believe it to be better, our participation makes it clear that we are quite willing to put up with all the outrages perpetrated against Our Eucharistic Lord at the New Mass and that we are unconcerned about the harm it causes to our fellow Catholics.

For, as I believe I have adequately shown above, the New Mass is causing great harm to the Mystical Body of Christ. The more we attend it, the more we will *perpetuate* in time this destructive liturgy. *Why don’t we take a stand for Our Divine Lord in the Eucharist and say by our refusal to attend that we will not put up with this offense against God and with the harm it is doing to souls?* If we love Our Holy Mother the Church and if we love our fellow Catholics (including those of future generations) we will take this stand — joining in solidarity with those who have already taken it. Thus we will have the great privileged of assisting the Church to get back on the right path in her liturgy as soon as possible! It is for the glory of God. It is for the salvation of souls!

²⁹ *Cranmer’s Godly Order*, pp. 288-9.

Let us also consider the situation of the Traditional Mass today. If it weren't for the so-called "disobedient" SSPX it is certain that the Traditional Mass would be almost (if not entirely) non-existent. Why did Pope John Paul II give greater freedom to the Traditional Mass? It was because of the courageous disobedience of those who refused to attend *Novus Ordo* liturgies. How did the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter come into existence? It was only on account of Archbishop Lefebvre's pronouncement that he was going to consecrate bishops. Only when it came to such a crisis did the Vatican step in and offer to authorize a fraternity for priests who would only offer the Traditional Mass. And thanks to this act of Lefebvre, the availability of Traditional Latin Masses has been markedly increasing since then. (Yet, as we know, since protocol 1411 in the year 2000, the priests of the Fraternity of St. Peter — at least some — are now required at times to celebrate or concelebrate the New Mass.) The point is that we see that there has been much good fruit from the SSPX's "disobedience." Of course I do not mean to say that the end justifies the means. There is no need for this since, as I have shown above, it is Church teaching that there are times when one can and should disobey a Pope. Our present situation certainly fits the description of such a time. (For more on the justification of the position of the SSPX see Michael Davies *Apologia Pro Marcel Lefebvre* on page 39 of this booklet.)

RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

(brought up by a lay reviewer of the treatise above)

1. The SSPX says the *Novus Ordo* can be valid, yet it says repeatedly that it is “evil”, “sacrilegious”— how can that be? This appears illogical to me.

Though this question was already answered above, I will elaborate more here.

The Church teaches that a valid Mass can be sacrilegious. Here we see a mixture of good and evil. All that is necessary for a Mass to be valid is for the proper matter and form to be used by a valid priest intending to do what the Church does. However, as mentioned above, the priest can validly consecrate with the intention of afterwards desecrating the Host. Or an ignorant, but good-willed priest can offer Mass as best as he knows how from the bad seminary he attended. The Mass could very well be valid, but because of certain abuses which he learned to make part of the Mass, he could also be doing or allowing sacrilegious things to take place (*i.e.*, females dancing in leotards). These then are both a valid and sacrilegious/evil Masses.

Let us consider the hypothetical situation of a priest who offered a valid Mass in a brothel with all sorts of filthy things going on right around him. Should someone fulfill his Sunday obligation there if there were nowhere else to go? I am sure all would agree he should not. The same can be true with other kinds of sacrileges perpetrated against Our Blessed Lord during the Mass and it is precisely for this reason that I have questioned the necessity and even the discretion of attending these types of valid Masses on a day of obligation even when no other Mass is available. I do not see how it can be an obligation to attend a Mass where so many sacrileges against Our Lord are perpetrated and the Catholic Faith is not portrayed. It seems to me that by my participation in such a Mass (without my making any *public* objection), I am giving silent approval and showing others by my example that what is taking place is something good and worthy of the participation of faithful Catholics.

Besides being a sacrilege, it would be harmful to *morals* to participate in a valid Mass taking place in a brothel. In like manner, it is harmful to *faith* to participate in a valid Mass in which the Catholic Faith is compromised and not properly portrayed (because as we have repeatedly stated: *lex orandi, lex credendi* — the way we

pray determines the way we believe). And by participating in either Mass (whether harmful to *morals* or harmful to *faith*) I give bad example to others.

2. *In the Novus Ordo the words “for all” have usually been used in the vernacular after the consecration of the wine rather than the traditional “for many [pro multis].” This was a stumbling block for me until I asked a certain Maronite priest fluent in Aramaic and Hebrew, about the translation. He says the actual Aramaic words (which Maronites use in their liturgy) can be translated in English either way — “for many” or “for all.” So enough of all the fuss about the use of “for many”!*

I am happy to report that this question should, in short order, become a mute point. With gratitude I relate that our present Pontiff, Pope Benedict XVI, has ordered that in the next few years all translations of the words of consecration must be corrected to read *pro multis* (i.e. “for many”).³⁰ It is important to note that *pro multis* is found in the original Latin text of the *Novus Ordo*. For those who have further interest in this question, I add the following:

To begin with, we do not know what exact word Our Lord spoke in Aramaic because the Gospels except for Matthew were written in Greek. Matthew was written in Hebrew, but I believe the oldest extant copy we have is also in Greek. In all three synoptic Gospels find that the word *many* is used and not *all*. Yet, what is more important, is that *many*, rather than *all*, has been used throughout the entire history of the Church. Moreover, we find that the Church has actually provided us some teaching on this subject. First there is the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas:

The words “pro vobis et pro multis” (“For you and for many”) are used to distinguish the virtue of the Blood of Christ from its fruits: for the Blood of our Savior is of sufficient value to save all men but its fruits are applicable only to a certain number and not to all, and this is their own fault. Or, as the theologians say, this Precious Blood is (in itself) sufficiently (sufficienter) able to save all men, but (on our part) effectually (efficaciter) it does not save all — it saves only those who co-operate with grace. (This is the explanation of St. Thomas, as quoted by Pope Benedict XIV.)

³⁰ See letter of Francis Cardinal Arinze (Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments) to all presidents of all Conferences of Bishops of the world, Oct. 17, 2006.

Then, we also have this teaching from the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*:

The additional words, “for you and for many,” are taken, some from Matthew (26:28), some from Luke (22:20), but were joined together by the Catholic Church under the guidance of the Spirit of God. They serve to declare the fruit and advantage of His Passion. For if we look to its value, we must confess that the Redeemer shed His blood for the salvation of all; but if we look to the fruit which mankind has received from it, we shall easily find that it pertains not unto all, but to many of the human race. When therefore (Our Lord) said: “For you,” He meant either those who were present, or those chosen from among the Jewish people, such as were, with the exception of Judas, the disciples with whom He was speaking. When He added: “And for many,” He wished to be understood to mean the remainder of the elect from among the Jews or Gentiles.

With reason, therefore, were the words “for all” not used, as in this place the fruits of the Passion are alone spoken of, and to the elect only did His Passion bring the fruit of salvation. And this is the purport of the Apostle when he says: “Christ was offered once to exhaust the sins of many”; and also of the words of our Lord in John: “I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me, because they are Thine.” (Catechism of the Council of Trent, pp. 227-8, TAN Books edition)

Finally, I believe the idea that there are no words in Aramaic distinguishing the *many* and *all* may be false. One author I read claims there are distinguishing words. He says: “Our Lord spoke Aramaic. The word He would have used for *all* in this language is: *kol*, or *kola*; the word He would have used for *many* is: ‘*saggi’an*.’”

3. *While I may sympathize with the Society of St. Pius X’s love of the Latin Mass, they have separated themselves from the Church. (As an aside, it is humorous that the SSPX argues that “schism” is a reason for a valid Mass to be displeasing to God when they themselves are canonically in schism!!).*

It is evident that the SSPX is *not* a schismatic group as clearly proved by Michael Davies. Please see his article *Apologia Pro Marcel Lefebvre* which begins on p. 39.

4. *As faithful Catholics, we must accept that things like Vatican II, which were “signed off” by the Pope, are legitimate. The words may be unclear, confusing, lead to error, not appeal to us, etc, etc, but we are CATHOLIC and therefore follow Christ in His Church regardless. We complain about*

liberal “cafeteria Catholics,” but isn’t the SSPX picking and choosing too? We must remain faithful and always remember that the Church will never fail in teaching dogma. Leaders can and do fail in leadership, administration, personal holiness; sometimes we just don’t like certain popes/bishops for personal reasons. Vatican II is very distasteful to me, and the outcomes are even more unpalatable, but no dogma/doctrine was touched (and couldn’t be), so it must be accepted — kind of like vegetables we don’t like to eat when we are kids! This is why we are not Protestant — we don’t pick and choose.

Yes, the Church will never fail in teaching the pure truth in its official dogmatic definitions. But dogma can be undermined by certain policies the Church takes. For example, the Church’s new teaching on ecumenism, which was given birth within the Church at Vatican II, is not an article of Faith which Catholics are required to hold. This new policy which clearly contradicts Pope Pius XI’s Encyclical *Mortalium Animos* (1928) is clearly undermining the solemnly defined dogma that outside the Catholic Church there is no salvation. Rather than reinforcing this thrice-defined dogma, it is bringing about an attitude of religious indifferentism and lending support to the heretical idea of universalism (*i.e.* that all are saved) — which was why the Church has always condemned the idea of taking part in ecumenical assemblies.

The New Mass is the same. It undermines dogma, as was said above, because it does not clearly manifest the Catholic Faith and thus easily leads us into error. We see many Catholics weekly attending the *Novus Ordo* (and even daily!) and at the same time losing their Catholic Faith — even with regards to the Church’s teaching on the Eucharist!!!

The SSPX is not picking and choosing. They agree that the New Mass is valid when said “by the book,” and that Vatican II was a valid Church Council. They only reject, on a *level beneath defined dogma*, those new policies and teachings that are in contradiction to, and which undermine, the traditional teachings of the Holy Catholic Church. They cling not to any new teaching of their own but to *antiquity*. We have a duty to uphold the Faith in all its integrity when it is being undermined — even as we have seen — to the point of disobedience. St. Vincent Lérins (5th Century) understood this and stated:

What should the Catholic Christian therefore do if some part of the Church arrives at the point of detaching itself from the universal communion and the universal faith? What else can he do but prefer the

*general body which is healthy to the gangrenous and corrupted limb? And if some new contagion strives to poison, not just a small part of the Church but the whole Church at once, then again his great concern will be to attach himself to Antiquity which obviously cannot anymore be seduced by any deceptive novelty.*³¹

Clearly this is what Archbishop Lefebvre has done to safeguard the Faith. Again, let us keep in mind the very important fact that even if the Church cannot fail us in defining dogma, she can fail in many other ways in which dogma becomes *undermined*, and error and heresy *seem to be* taught as truth. The following bits of information are good to keep in mind:

On June 13, 1929, during the great vision of the Blessed Trinity, Our Lady said to Sr. Lucy (one of the seers of Fatima): *"The moment has come for God to ask the Holy Father to make, in union with all the bishops of the world, the consecration of Russia to My Immaculate Heart."* We know for certain that Pope Pius XI was informed of this request. He did not comply; and in August of 1931 Our Lord said to Sr. Lucy, *"Make it known to my ministers that given they follow the King of France in delaying the execution of my request, that they will follow him into misfortune."*

What did Our Lord mean by this statement? On June 17, 1689, He had commanded King Louis XIV of France, through St. Margaret Mary, to consecrate his kingship, his court, and all of France to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. If he had done so God would have greatly blessed him and given him triumph over all his enemies. However, he never made the consecration, and neither did his successors. So in 1789 — exactly one hundred years later — King Louis XVI was imprisoned and later executed, and the poor country suffered the French Revolution with all its errors, which all but destroyed the Church in France.

Likewise, the succeeding popes since 1929 have failed to consecrate Russia, and so the Church has suffered its revolution.³² As

³¹ The *Vincentian Canon*, A.D. 434. Found in Chapter 4 of the *Commonitorium* #4, Cambridge Patristic Texts.

³² On a number of occasions certain Popes have attempted to make the consecration. However, on each occasion some element was missing in fulfilling Our Lady's request. To give some examples, in 1942 Pope Pius XII

the liberal Cardinal Suenens of Belgium (who called into question *Humanae Vitae* — the papal encyclical reaffirming the immorality of artificial birthcontrol) exclaimed, “*Vatican II is the French Revolution in the Catholic Church.*” He also stated, “*One cannot understand the French or the Russian revolutions unless one knows something of the old regimes which they brought to an end... It is the same in Church affairs: a reaction can only be judged in relation to the state of things that preceded it. The Second Vatican Council marked the end of an epoch; and if we stand back from it a little more we see it marked the end of a series of epochs, the end of an age.*”³³ And the modernist theologian, Father Congar, who was a *periti* (a so-called “expert”) at the Council exclaimed, “*The Church has had, peacefully, its October Revolution.*”³⁴

It seems clear from that words of Our Lord that until the Consecration of Russia is made, *in the manner Our Lady has asked*, the Church will continue on the path “*into misfortune.*”

consecrated the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in a radio address, but did not mention Russia by name. Sr. Lucy later stated: “*The Good Lord has already shown me His contentment with the act performed by the Holy Father and several bishops, although it was incomplete according to his desire...*” (p. 107). In 1950 Russian Catholics requested the Consecration from Pope Pius XII in an audience. He responded by issuing the letter *Sacro vergente anno* in which he stated: “*today we consecrate and in a most special manner we entrust all the peoples of Russia to this Immaculate Heart...*” (p. 119). According to Sr. Lucy this did not fulfill Our Lady’s request because, though Russia was mentioned, the world’s episcopate did not participate. In 1982 Pope John Paul II renewed the Consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart and once again Sr. Lucy stated: “*The consecration of Russia is not done as Our Lady demanded*” (p. 223). She explained that Russia was not specifically consecrated and the world’s episcopate did not participate. Pope John Paul II repeated this consecration again in 1984 on March 25 asking the bishops of the world to join him. Three days before, on March 22, Sr. Lucy read the text of this consecration and stated: “*That consecration cannot have a decisive character*” — obviously, because once again Russia was not specifically mentioned. Interestingly, on March 27 the Italian newspaper *Avvenire* reported that three hours *after* having made that consecration, Pope John Paul publicly prayed to Our Lady at St. Peter’s asking Her to bless: “*those people for whom You Yourself are awaiting our act of consecration and entrusting.*” (pp. 224-5). (All quotes taken from the book *Fatima in Twilight*, by Mark Fellows. Niagara Falls: Marmion Publications, 2003.)

³³ Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, *Open Letter to Confused Catholics*, p. 100. Kansas City: Angelus Press, 1999.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

It is worthwhile to note that in a number of letters Sr. Lucy wrote to her nephews in the priesthood in the 1970's, she refers to Churchmen *"being fooled by false doctrine"*; to a *"diabolical disorientation"* afflicting *"so many persons who occupy places of responsibility"* in the Church; to *"priests and consecrated souls"* who *"are so deceived and misled"* because *"the devil has succeeded in infiltrating evil under cover of good...leading into error and deceiving souls having a heavy responsibility through the place which they occupy ... They are blind men guiding other blind men."*³⁵

5. When referring to the New Mass, there is really only one thing to consider: Did the Pope sign off on it? The Pope is the Vicar of Christ, and speaks for Him; we must accept and believe that or we are not Catholic. I am not going to doubt Christ. Like it or not, the Vicar of Christ said "yes" to the Council and the New Mass. Thus, *"Roma locuta, causa finita."*

Just a word on the famous saying: *"Roma locuta, causa finita."* Dietrich von Hildebrand (whom Pope Pius XII hailed as a *"twentieth century doctor of the Church"*) in his book, *The Charitable Anathema*, warned: *"The new liturgy actually threatens to frustrate the confrontation with Christ for it discourages reverence in the face of mystery, precludes awe, and all but extinguishes a sense of sacredness."* And he speaks of men approaching God *"in an attitude of either of arrogant superiority or of tactless, smug familiarity. In either case he is crippled..."* It is certain that he was only speaking of the innovations of the *Novus Ordo* in its *"pristine"* form when it was first given to the Church — without the countless changes that have taken place since then.

That said, it may be useful to know that he also wrote in the same book that when a papal decision *"has the character of compromise or is the result of pressure or the weakness or the individual person of the Pope, we cannot and should not say: "Roma locuta, causa finita."* That is, we cannot see in it the will of God; we must recognize that God only permits it, just as He has permitted the unworthiness or weakness of several Popes in the history of the Church.... **On account of my deep love for and devotion to the Church, it is a special cross for me not to be able to welcome every practical decision of the Holy See, particularly in a time like ours,**

³⁵ Frère Michel de la Sainte Trinité, *The Whole Truth about Fatima*, Vol. 3, pp. 754-8.

which is witnessing a crumbling of the spirit of obedience and of respect for the Holy Father.” [Emphasis mine]

A Word on the Origin of the Saying:

“Roma Locuta, Causa Finite.”

(Taken from: www.traditio.com/tradlib/popelim.txt)

Pope Zosimus, in the presence of the Roman clergy, recognized as orthodox the heretical statements of Pelagius, which had been condemned by Pope Innocent I and the two Councils of Carthage. Pelagianism, which denied the doctrine of Original Sin and man's need for grace, was a virulent heresy of the time, against which St. Augustine wrote numerous tracts (*The Remission of Sins and the Baptism of Children, The Spirit and the Letter, Letter to Hilary, Nature and Grace, Perfect Justice, The Acts of Pelagius, The Grace of Christ, and Original Sin*). The Pope condemned those who held the orthodox Catholic faith as calumniators (*Letter Postquam nobis*, November 21, 417; *Letter Magnum pondus*) and demanded a formal retraction from the orthodox African bishops, St. Augustine of Hippo and St. Aurelius of Carthage. In response, St. Augustine and St. Aurelian took a solemn oath with God as witness (*obtestatio*), affirming that the prior Catholic doctrine prevailed over the judgment of the Pope, which was upheld by a plenary council of all Africa assembled. Confronted with resistance to his part in perpetuating heresy, Pope Zosimus finally recanted and renewed the excommunication of the heretic Pelagius.

It was around this time that St. Augustine uttered the famous words: *Roma locuta est; causa finita est*, in a Sermon CXXXI of September 417. Pope Zosimus was waffling on his predecessor's, Pope St. Innocent I's, anathema against the heretic Pelagius. St. Augustine meant by his statement since Rome had already spoken on the matter (a reference to Pope St. Innocent I's anathema against Pelagius), the case ought not to be reopened, even by Pope Zosimus, who ought to give his assent to the solemn judgment of his predecessor. St. Augustine made his statement, then, at a time when a Pope was in the process of lending aid and comfort to heretics, when he should have been holding fast to what his predecessor had decreed. The great Saint was not saying that every decision of Rome must be blindly obeyed; otherwise, he would have supported the reigning Pope. He was warning people, the Pope included, that Rome had already spoken on this matter and that it would be gravely wrong for anyone (even, presumably, a Pope) to attempt to reverse a solid and sound judgment on a matter of Catholic doctrine.

So, as we see, the first time this famous saying was ever used was against a Pope. St. Augustine did not say this to himself concerning

what the reigning Pope Zosimus was presently doing; rather, he used it against Pope Zosimus referring to what Rome had previously said.

Final Remarks

Before I finish, it seems important to stress one point. If we can find solid justification for disobeying the Holy Father with regards to attending the *Novus Ordo Missæ* (and with regards to other areas where he contradicts the traditional teaching of the Church — *i.e.* ecumenism), this does not mean we are free to disregard his God-given authority altogether. We are still bound to show him the utmost respect as the Vicar of Christ and to obey him in all his lawful commands. Any other attitude towards him is clearly un-Catholic, harmful to the Church and dangerous to our salvation. Let us be mindful to fulfill our duty to continually pray for him that God will give him the grace to take more corrective action against this crisis of the *Novus Ordo*; for, as long as it remains available in the Church, it will continue to be a danger to the Faith and thus the salvation of Catholics.

In conclusion, to add a little more to what has been said, we have the words of Jesus to the Servant of God Luisa Piccarreta.³⁶

*My daughter, I could confuse the enemies of the Holy Church, but I don't want to; if I should do so, who would purge my Church? **The eyes of the members of the Church are dazzled, especially those in high places of dignity, and they view many things wrongly and go so far as to protect those who feign to be virtuous and to oppress and condemn the truly good.** This displeases Me very much, seeing the few real sons of mine under the weight of injustice — those from whom the Church must rise again and to whom I am giving many graces in order to dispose them for this. I see them with their backs against the wall and tied as to impede their movement; this hurts Me so much that I feel Myself infuriated for them.*" (Vol. 10: May 16, 1911 — emphasis added)

He also says: "*When I permit the churches to be left deserted, the ministers dispersed, and the Masses decreased, **it means that the***

³⁶ The Italian mystic and Servant of God, Luisa Piccarreta (1865-1947): Under obedience to her various confessors over the period of 40 years Luisa kept a spiritual diary of her intimate communications with Our Lord. In this 36-volume work known as the *Book of Heaven*, Jesus reveals the sublime sanctity of Living in the Divine Will. St. Annibale di Francia — a recognized expert in discerning private revelations — was commissioned by her Bishop to review, edit and publish this work. At the time of his death in 1927 he had completed and placed his *Nihil Obstat* on the first 19 volumes.

sacrifices are an offense to Me; the prayers are insults; the adorations, irreverences; the confessions, pastimes without fruit. Therefore, not finding my glory anymore, rather offenses in the blessing I give, since they are of no use to me anymore, I remove them. Nevertheless, this removing of the ministers from the sanctuary will also indicate that things have reached the worst point, and the diversity of the chastisements will be multiplied.” (Vol. 12: Feb. 12, 1918 — emphasis added)

And, speaking of his priests: “These ministers with their poisonous contact, instead of gathering souls, distract them from Me. Instead of making them spiritual, they make them more dissipated, more defective, so much so that souls are seen, who do not have contact with them, who are much better and more spiritual.... **I am constrained to permit that the people go far away from the churches and from the Sacraments, so the contact of these ministers does not poison them against Me more and make them worse.**” (Vol. 12: Sept. 4, 1918 — emphasis added)

Well my friend, these are my current thoughts on the *Novus Ordo* and on the duty we have to attend or not attend it. My interest is simply in the truth and in taking the best action to end this current crisis in the Church. I greatly desire that in whatever way possible, I may be of service to the Church in rectifying the grave situation. Though all may not appreciate this booklet, that is what has motivated me to publish it. And I wish to repeat again, as my own, the words of Dietrich Von Hildebrand: “On account of my deep love for and devotion to the Church, it is a special cross for me not to be able to welcome every practical decision of the Holy See, particularly in a time like ours, which is witnessing a crumbling of the spirit of obedience and of respect for the Holy Father.”

Aware that the Church teaches that sins against Our Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament are “*the gravest of all*” sacrileges (see footnote 1), I would like to finish by encouraging all to frequently and devoutly offer the following prayer of reparation to help atone for the innumerable sins of this nature occurring in our times:

Most Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, I adore Thee profoundly; and I offer Thee the Most Precious Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for all the outrages, sacrileges and indifference by which He Himself is offended, by the infinite merits of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I beg the conversion of poor sinners.

(Given by an Angel to the three shepherd children of Fatima)

God bless you & please pray for me,

Robert T. Hart

APOLOGIA PRO MARCEL LEFEBVRE

by Michael Davies

The Church has been compared to a house, the House of the Living God, and that house is built upon a rock, the rock of Peter. If we are to be Catholics we must be in communion with the successor of Peter. It makes no difference what we think of the Pope; we are bound to remain in communion with him as long as he is the Pope. But the Pope is not Christ, he is the Vicar of Christ. The Pope is infallible when he proclaims to us solemn teaching on faith or morals, but he is not inerrant, which means that he is not protected from making mistakes or errors of judgment; and he is not impeccable, which means that he is not protected from committing sin. In Galatians 2, verse 11, we read of how St. Paul stood up to St. Peter and rebuked him to his face. St. Thomas, commenting upon this verse, remarks:

Paul who was Peter's subject, rebuked him in public on account of the imminent danger of scandal concerning the faith, and, as the gloss of St. Augustine says: "Peter gave an example to superiors that if at any time they should happen to stray from the straight path they should not disdain to be rebuked by their subjects."

Where obedience to any superior is concerned, St. Thomas Aquinas gives us these principles as a rule of thumb. If our superior commands us to do something that is wrong, we have a duty to disobey. If a superior makes an unjust command we have a right to disobey. We are not obliged to disobey, but could submit humbly to the unjust command. Every ruler including the Pope is bound to rule his subjects justly. The Pope has supreme authority, but he does not have absolute or arbitrary authority. During the debate which took place at the First Vatican Council prior to the promulgation of the dogma of infallibility, objections were made that this would endow the Pope with arbitrary power and he would be able to rule the Church in a tyrannical manner. The relator to the Council, the bishop charged with explaining the meaning of the proposed dogma, stated that the Pope's power was not arbitrary, and that the principal restriction upon it is that he must use his position only to build up the Mystical Body, and must do nothing that could undermine it. The Pope is bound to ensure that all his teaching and all his legislation build up the Mystical Body, and that he rule his subjects justly.

Among the rights of the faithful — which the Pope is bound to respect according to the *1983 Code of Canon Law* — are the right to make known their spiritual needs to the pastors of the Church; the right and even the duty to manifest their opinion on matters that pertain to the good of the Church; the right to receive help from the sacred pastors out of the spiritual goods of the Church, especially the Word of God and the Sacraments; the right to worship God according to the prescriptions of their own rite; the right to a Catholic education; and the right not to have their reputation damaged or their privacy violated.

As has been explained the Pope has an absolute obligation to rule justly. St. Thomas and the consensus of Catholic theologians and canonists teach that legislation, and this would include liturgical legislation, is unjust if it is not conducive to the public good or is too burdensome for those subject to it, which means that it must not only not be impossible to carry out but not too difficult or distressing. The liturgical reform that followed the Second Vatican Council was unjust. It was not conducive to the public good, and was too difficult and distressing to be accepted by countless faithful Catholics as it robbed them of their greatest spiritual heritage, the traditional Mass of the Roman Rite. After the Council these faithful made their spiritual need for the traditional Mass known to the sacred pastors. They asked above all to be allowed to have recourse to the traditional Mass of the Roman Rite that goes back in all essentials to the pontificate of Pope Gregory the Great at the end of the sixth century. The faithful asked for bread and were given stones.

Of all the bishops in the world, only Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and Bishop de Castro Mayer, of Campos in Brazil, refused to compromise in any way with the revolution masquerading under the guise of reform and which was manifestly destroying the Church. Archbishop Lefebvre established a seminary, with the approval and encouragement of the Holy See, in which priests could be trained to celebrate the Tridentine Mass. Its immediate success evoked the fury of liberal bishops who pressured the Holy See into ordering the Archbishop to close his seminary in a manner that not only ignored the requirements of Canon Law, but those of natural justice. The Archbishop refused to comply unless he was accorded the canonical hearing which is the right of every Catholic, a request

which was ignored. This gave rise to the painfully ironic situation of a respected prelate being condemned without a trial for an offense that had not been specified, and then having his amply justified refusal to comply cited as an offense to justify his condemnation!

Archbishop Lefebvre has been compared rightly to St. Athanasius. He is the Athanasius of our times. Like St. Athanasius and like St. Eusebius of Samosata, he went into the dioceses of bishops who were not acting as good shepherds, to give the people the instruction, the sacramental grace, and the pastors that they needed. For one bishop to intrude into the diocese of another is a very serious matter. It can only be justified if there is a state of necessity. A state of emergency, urgency, or necessity occurs in the Church when its continuation, order, or activity are threatened or harmed in an important way, and the emergency cannot be overcome by observing the normal positive laws. The emergency would relate principally to teaching, the liturgy, and ecclesiastical discipline. An interesting reference to such a situation occurs in a study of the Church's divine constitution by Dom Adrien Grea, OSB, in his examination of the extraordinary powers of the episcopate:

In the fourth century St. Eusebius of Samosata traveled thorough Eastern dioceses devastated by the Arians and ordained orthodox pastors for them, without having particular jurisdiction over them. These are evidently extraordinary actions, as were the circumstances that gave rise to them.

In *The Development of Catholic Doctrine*, Cardinal Newman refutes the opinion that interference by one bishop in the diocese of another necessarily constitutes schism. Faithful Catholics have a duty to divide themselves from schismatic or heretical bishops, and where division is a duty it is not a sin. An orthodox bishop does not sin by interfering in a diocese where the bishop is guilty of separation from the Faith by heresy or even *de facto* schism. St. Athanasius did not cause division when he entered the dioceses of Arian bishops. He was interfering in order to uphold tradition and sustain the faith of true Catholics as a legitimate response to the division caused by the Arian bishops. The first loyalty of every bishop must be the Church as a whole. During a period of schism and heresy, their duty to defend the integrity of tradition extends beyond any single diocese. Cardinal Newman illustrates this by

pointing out that “*St. Athanasius, driven from his Church, makes all Christendom his home, from Treves (Trier) to Ethiopia.*” This was undoubtedly a legitimate response to a state of emergency or necessity within the Church.

St. Thomas Aquinas explains that schism pertains to the moral order and that “the essential is that which is intended...”

This brings us to the subject of schism. Schism is defined in Canon 751 as the obstinate post-baptismal refusal of submission to the Roman Pontiff and of communion with the members of the Church subject to him. A Catholic who breaks the strict letter of Canon Law in order to uphold the Faith cannot be accused of Schism. It is explained in the article on schism in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, the greatest Catholic reference work ever published, that schism and disobedience are often confused. Every act of schism involves disobedience, but not every act of disobedience is schismatic. The true meaning of schism, as expounded within the context of Catholic theology by such theologians as Aquinas and Cajetan, is that the act of schism is found primarily in the intention of the accused person. The guilt of schism, properly so-called, is incurred only when a baptized Catholic intends to sever himself from the unity of the Church by rejecting the existence of the papal office itself, that is by denying that the Pope has the right to Command, or by refusing communion with those Catholics subject to him, that is, by refusing to recognize them as fellow Catholics. The refusal, even the pertinacious refusal, to obey the Pope in a particular instance does not constitute schism. St. Thomas Aquinas explains that the sin of schism pertains to the moral order, and that in the moral order “*the essential is that which is intended. ... Accordingly, schismatics properly so-called are those who willfully and intentionally separate themselves from the unity of the church*” By no possible stretch of the imagination could it be claimed that Archbishop Lefebvre intended to do this. If he had wished to do so he could have ordained bishops years before 1988, and he would not have entered into protracted negotiations with the Holy See.

On 17 June 1988 an admonition was sent to Archbishop Lefebvre by Cardinal Gantin stating that he would incur excommunication if he consecrated the four bishops:

Since on 15 June 1988 you stated that you intended to ordain four priests to the episcopate without having obtained the mandate of the Supreme Pontiff as required by Canon 1013 of the Code of Canon Law, I myself convey to you this public canonical warning confirming that if you should carry out your intention as stated above, you yourself and also the bishops ordained by you shall incur ipso facto excommunication latae sententiae reserved to the Apostolic See in accordance with Canon 1382. I therefore entreat and beseech you in the name of Jesus Christ to weigh carefully what you are about to undertake against the laws of sacred discipline, and the very grave consequences resulting there from for the communion of the Catholic Church, of which you are a bishop.

This admonition provides useful and irrefutable proof of the fact that until the consecration Archbishop Lefebvre was definitely not considered to be schismatic, but to be a bishop of the Catholic Church. I find it quite astonishing that if the proposed consecration were to be considered a schismatic act no mention was made of this in the canonical warning.

Even if it is accepted that Archbishop Lefebvre could not be considered schismatic for consecrating the four bishops, it can still be argued that he incurred excommunication in any case because this offense carries an automatic penalty of excommunication. But any laws in the Code which establish a penalty are subject to what is called a strict interpretation. Where any doubt exists, these laws must be interpreted in favor of the accused. That is to say, if there is any doubt about whether a penalty has been incurred [then] it has not been incurred; and there is most certainly doubt about whether Archbishop Lefebvre incurred the penalty of excommunication. He stated that his reason for the consecration is that a state of necessity existed in the sense that has just been explained. That this is indeed true can be shown objectively to be the case. The principal aspect of a state of necessity is that the continuity of the Church is in danger and anyone who believes that the continuity of the Church in the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Holland and France is not in danger has been living in blinkers since the Second Vatican Council.

Canon 1323 states that if one violates a law in the code because a state of necessity or emergency exists that person does not incur a penalty. If, therefore, a state of emergency does exist in the Church Archbishop Lefebvre was not even excommunicated. But let us argue that there is not a state of emergency in the Church. Let us

argue that everything is marvelous and that Mass attendance is rising rather than declining each year, that the religious orders are holier than they have ever been, and that children in Catholic schools are learning more and sounder Catholic doctrine than ever before. Would this mean that the penalty was incurred and the excommunication was valid? By no means. Canon 1323, which has just been cited, also states that a penalty has not been incurred if the person accused believes that a state of emergency exists. There can be no doubt at all about the fact that Archbishop Lefebvre believed a state of emergency existed, which means that he did not incur the penalty of excommunication.

A very strange thing happened when the decree claiming that the Archbishop had incurred *ipso facto* excommunication was published on 1 July 1988. Something was added to the warning contained in the admonition. The decree cited not simply Canon 1382, the Usurpation of an Ecclesiastical Office, but Canon 1364, schism. This is rather as if someone who had been arrested for robbing a bank was then brought into court and charged with robbing a bank and first-degree murder. The consecration of a bishop without a papal mandate is not an intrinsically schismatic offense. It was not designated a schismatic offense in the previous Code where it was not even punished by excommunication but only by suspension. If the offense is intrinsically schismatic it would be in the section of the Code dealing with schism, but it is not. Adding the accusation of schism, even with the approval of the Pope, cannot change an offense that is not schismatic into one that is schismatic.

It has been claimed that the Pope is above Canon Law and can do whatever he likes. It was explained earlier that during the debate on infallibility at the First Vatican Council, the relator explained that the Pope's power is not arbitrary. It would be incredibly arbitrary if the Pope could change Canon Law at his whim and excommunicate people just because he felt like doing so. The Pope, like any legislator, can change the law, but he is bound by the existing law until he changes it, and a judge must judge according to the law. If the Pope wished, he could step out on his balcony today and say that in future consecrating a bishop without a papal mandate will constitute a schismatic offense, and it would be a schismatic offense from that moment onwards. The Pope himself has promulgated the

Code of Canon Law, he has ruled that it is the Code of Canon Law for the Church, and he cannot suddenly decide to start changing the rules at his whim without first changing the law itself.

The decision of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith means that any Catholic can assist at chapels of the Society of St. Pius X without the least qualm of conscience.

In a letter dated 26 May 1993 Cardinal Lara, who is head of the Commission for the *Correct Interpretation of Canon Law*, answers the question as to whether consecrating a bishop without a papal mandate constitutes schism. He explains that:

The act of consecrating a bishop without a papal mandate is not in itself a schismatic act. In fact, in the Code where offenses are treated, these two are treated in two distinct headings. There are delicts against religion and the unity of the Church. And these are apostasy (i.e., renouncing the faith), schism, and heresy. Consecrating a bishop without a pontifical mandate is, on the other hand, an offense against the proper exercise of one's ministry. For example, there was an excommunication of the Vietnamese bishop, Ngo Dinh Thuc in '76 and '83 for an Episcopal Consecration, but it was not considered a schismatic act because there was no intent to break with the Church.

It was explained earlier that the offense of schism is found primarily in the intention of the person accused. Does he or does he not intend to sever himself from the Church? This is precisely what Cardinal Lara concedes here by confirming that the consecration of bishops without a papal mandate cannot be considered a schismatic act unless there is an intention to break with the Church, and that Archbishop Lefebvre had no intention of breaking with the Church is made clear by his subsequent correspondence with the Holy See.

It is sometimes claimed that simply to assist at a chapel of the Society of St. Pius X constitutes schism, and so for this reason the hundreds of thousands of Catholics who assist at Mass in churches and chapels of the Society may be very grateful to Bishop Ferrario of Honolulu who excommunicated five Catholics for having priests of the Society of St. Pius X come to say Mass for them, and for having Bishop Williamson come to confirm their children. Here is the precise charge made against these Catholics in the formal canonical warning of 18 January 1991, and we are indebted to the bishop for being so specific:

*Whereas on (sic) May 1987 you performed a schismatic act not only by procuring the services of an excommunicated Lefebvre bishop, Richard Williamson, who performed *contra iure*, illicit confirmation in your chapel, but also by that very association with the aforementioned bishop incurred *ipso facto* the grave censure of excommunication as forewarned by the Office of the Congregation of Bishops at the Vatican to all the faithful (July 1, 1988).*

The faithful who had been excommunicated appealed to the Holy See, and when one appeals to a legal court it has to uphold the law. The following judgment was delivered to Mrs. Patricia Morley, one of the Honolulu five in a letter dated 28 June 1993 from the Apostolic Pro-Nuncio in Washington:

Upon the instruction of His Eminence, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith [now Pope Benedict XVI], I perform the duty to communicate the following reply which I just received from him regarding the recourse submitted first by you and then by four other persons against the Decree of declaration of schism given on May 1, 1991 by His Excellency the Most Reverend Joseph A. Ferrario, Bishop Of Honolulu.

From the examination of the case, conducted upon the basis of the Law of the Church, it did not result that the facts referred to in the above mentioned decree are formal schismatic acts in the strict sense, as they do not constitute the offense of schism; and therefore the Congregation holds that the decree of May 1, 1991 lacks foundation and hence validity.

The decision of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith means that any Catholic can assist at chapels of the Society of St Pius X without the least qualm of conscience.

History has an extraordinary habit of repeating itself. What is happening today has happened before. It happened in the fourth century during the Arian heresy under Pope Liberius who was subjected to great pressure, and, unfortunately, proved to be weak. He excommunicated St. Athanasius, joining all the Arian bishops in doing this, and he signed a doctrinal formula of very dubious orthodoxy. And what happened? He was the first Pope not to be included in the Roman Martyrology and St. Athanasius is a Saint. Future generations of Catholics will regard Archbishop Lefebvre as a saint because he preserved for us some of the most precious traditions of our fathers and made it possible for countless Catholics

to continue to live a truly Catholic life during the greatest heresy that the Church has undergone since the fourth century. God has surely blessed him for it.

In summary, disobedience to the Pope in a particular instance need not constitute schism providing that his authority itself is not called into question, and the person concerned does not intend to sever himself from the unity of the Church (read the case of Bishop Grossest of Lincoln in my *Apologia Pro Marcel Lefebvre, Vol., I, Appendix 11*). This is particularly true where the disobedience is a response to a state of necessity in the Church. Consecrating a bishop without a papal mandate is not an intrinsically schismatic act, and a prelate who does so to counter a state of necessity does not even incur the penalty of *latae sententiae* excommunication, nor does he incur it even if there is no true state of necessity providing he believes sincerely that it exists. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has confirmed officially that assisting at Masses celebrated by Society priests or being confirmed by Society bishops does not constitute schism. The bishops, priests, and faithful of the Society who recognize Pope John Paul II as Sovereign Pontiff; and accept those in communion with the Pope outside the Society as their fellow Catholics, cannot possibly be said to be in schism. As they accept the entire deposit of Catholic doctrine on faith and morals, the Society clergy and faithful are almost certainly the least schismatic group in the Catholic Church today.

NOTE [by M. Davies]: It should be noted that in his letter Cardinal Lara also made the ridiculous claim that although consecrating a bishop without a papal mandate is not in itself a schismatic act, the Archbishop was already in a state of schism, and the offense of consecrating bishops simply concretized and made this explicit. The claim can be described as ridiculous because, as has been noted, in the admonition from Cardinal Gantin dated 17 June 1988, it was stated that Archbishop Lefebvre was a bishop of the Catholic Church. I have written to Cardinal Lara and the Prefects of four other Roman Congregations asking precisely what offense the Archbishop committed in the two weeks between the admonition and the Decree of Excommunication dated 17 July 1988 which placed him in a state of schism. The only reply that I received was from the Ecclesia Dei Commission which advised me to address my enquiry to Cardinal Lara!

APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTION — *QUO PRIMUM*

Pope St. Pius V - July 14, 1570

Upon our elevation to the Apostolic throne We gladly turned Our mind and energies, and directed all Our thoughts, to the matter of preserving incorrupt the public worship of the Church; and We have striven, with God's help, by every means in Our power to achieve that purpose.

Whereas amongst other decrees of the Holy Council of Trent We were charged with revision and re-issue of the sacred books, to wit the Catechism, the Missal and the Breviary; and whereas We have with God's consent published a Catechism for the instruction of the faithful, and thoroughly revised the Breviary for the due performance of the Divine Office, We next, in order that Missal and Breviary might be in perfect harmony, as is right and proper (considering that it is altogether fitting that there should be in the Church only one appropriate manner of Psalmody and one sole rite of celebrating Mass), deemed it necessary to give Our immediate attention to what still remained to be done, namely the re-editing of the Missal with the least possible delay.

We resolved accordingly to delegate this task to a select committee of scholars; and they, having at every stage of their work and with the utmost care collated the ancient codices in Our Vatican Library and reliable (original or amended) codices from elsewhere, and having also consulted the writing of ancient and approved authors who have bequeathed to us records relating to the said sacred rites, thus restored the Missal itself to the pristine form and rite of the holy Fathers. When this production had been subjected to close scrutiny and further amended We, after mature consideration, ordered that the final result be forthwith printed and published in Rome, so that all may enjoy the fruits of this labor: that priests may know what prayers to use, and what rites and ceremonies they are to use henceforward in the celebration of Masses.

Now therefore, in order that all everywhere may adopt and observe what has been delivered to them by the Holy Roman Church, Mother and Mistress of the other churches, it shall be unlawful henceforth and forever throughout the Christian world to sing or to read Masses according to any formula other than that of this Missal published by Us; this ordinance to apply to all churches and chapels, with or without care of souls, patriarchal, collegiate and parochial, be they secular or belonging to any religious Order whether of men (including the military Orders) or of women, in which conventual Masses are or ought to be sung aloud in choir or read privately according to the rites and customs of the Roman Church; to apply moreover even if the said churches have been in any way exempted, whether by indult of the Apostolic See, by custom, by privilege, or even by oath or Apostolic confirmation, or have their rights and faculties guaranteed to them in any other way whatsoever; saving only those in which the practice of saying Mass differently was granted over two hundred years

ago simultaneously with the Apostolic See's institution and confirmation of the church, and those in which there has prevailed a similar custom followed continuously for a period of not less than *two hundred years*; in which cases We in no wise rescind their prerogatives or customs aforesaid. Nevertheless, if this Missal which We have seen fit to publish be more agreeable to these last, We hereby permit them to celebrate Mass according to this rite, subject to the consent of their bishop or prelate, and of their whole Chapter, all else to the contrary notwithstanding. All other churches aforesaid are hereby denied the use of other missals, which are to be wholly and entirely rejected; and by this present Constitution, which shall have the *force of law in perpetuity*, We order and enjoin under pain of Our displeasure that nothing be added to Our newly published Missal, nothing omitted there from, and nothing whatsoever altered there in.

We specifically command each and every patriarch, administrator and all other persons of whatsoever ecclesiastical dignity, be they even Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, or, possessed of any other rank or pre-eminence, and We order them by virtue of holy obedience to sing or to read the Mass according to the rite and manner and norm herein laid down by Us, and henceforward to discontinue and utterly discard all other rubrics and rites of other missals, howsoever ancient, which they have been accustomed to follow, and not to presume in celebrating Mass to introduce any ceremonies or recite any prayers other than those contained in this Missal.

Furthermore, by these presents and by virtue of Our Apostolic authority, We give and grant in perpetuity that for the singing or reading of Mass in any church whatsoever this Missal may be followed absolutely, without any scruple of conscience or fear of incurring any penalty, judgment or censure, and may be freely and lawfully used. Nor shall bishops, administrators, canons, chaplains and other secular priests, or religious of whatsoever Order or by whatsoever title designated, be obliged to celebrate Mass otherwise than enjoined by Us. We likewise order and declare that no one whosoever shall be forced or coerced into altering this Missal; and this present Constitution can never be revoked or modified, but shall forever remain valid and have the force of law, notwithstanding previous constitutions or edicts of provincial or synodal councils, and notwithstanding the usage of the churches aforesaid established by very long and even immemorial prescription, saving only usage of more than two hundred years.³⁷

³⁷ It is clear from this paragraph that — as Pope Benedict XVI has now formally stated — the Traditional (Tridentine) Latin Mass *“has never been abrogated.”* Thus, all Latin Rite priests have always remained free to offer it. Readers should be careful, however, not to interpret the strong wording in this same paragraph to mean that a future Pope could never make valid modifications to this *“received and approved rite.”* Such modifications have been made by

Consequently it is Our will, and by the same authority We decree, that one month after publication of this Our Constitution and Missal, priests of the Roman Curia shall be obliged to sing or to read the Mass in accordance therewith; others south of the Alps, after three months; those who live beyond the Alps, after six months or as soon as the Missal becomes available for purchase.

Furthermore, in order that the said Missal may be preserved incorrupt and kept free from defects and errors, the penalty for nonobservance in the case of all printers resident in territory directly or indirectly subject to Ourselves and the Holy Roman Church shall be forfeiture of their books and a fine of 100 gold ducats payable *ipso facto* to the Apostolic Treasury. In the case of those resident in other parts of the world it shall be excommunication *latae sententiae* and all other penalties at Our discretion; and by Our Apostolic authority and the tenor of these presents. We also decree that they must not dare or presume either to print or to publish or to sell, or in any way to take delivery of such books without Our approval and consent, or without express permission of the Apostolic Commissary in the said parts appointed by us for that purpose. Each of the said printers must receive from the aforementioned Commissary a standard Missal to serve as an exemplar for subsequent copies, which, when made, must be compared with the exemplar and agree faithfully therewith, varying in no wise from the first impression printed in Rome.

But, since it would be difficult for this present Constitution to be transmitted to all parts of the world and to come to the notice of all concerned simultaneously, We direct that it be, as usual, posted and published at the doors of the Basilica of the Prince of the Apostles, at those of the Apostolic Chancery, and at the end of the *Campo de' Fiori*; moreover We direct that printed copies of the same, signed by a notary public and authenticated with the seal of an ecclesiastical dignitary, shall possess the same unqualified and indubitable validity everywhere and in every country that would attend the display there of Our present text. Accordingly, no one whosoever is permitted to infringe or rashly contravene this notice of Our permission, statute, ordinance, command, direction, grant, indult, declaration, will, decree and prohibition. Should any person venture to do so, let him understand that he will incur the wrath of Almighty God and of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.

Given at Saint Peter's, Rome, in the year of Our Lord's Incarnation one thousand five hundred and seventy, on the fourteenth day of July in the fifth year of Our Pontificate. [*Quo Primum remains in force to this day.*]

Popes before the time of the *Novus Ordo*. Yet, as I believe I have clearly shown in this booklet, the *Novus Ordo* goes far beyond making *valid modifications*; it is, rather, a whole *New Order* of Mass that is “a striking departure from the Catholic theology of the Holy Mass” (see back cover).

truths which have always been believed by Christians can be altered or silenced without infidelity to that sacred deposit of doctrine to which the Catholic faith is bound forever. Recent reforms have amply shown that fresh changes in the liturgy could not but lead to utter bewilderment on the part of the faithful, who are already giving signs of resistiveness and of an indubitable lessening of the faith. **Amongst the best of the clergy the practical result is an agonizing crisis of conscience of which numberless instances come to our notice daily.**

We are certain that these considerations, which spring from the living voice of the shepherds of the flock, cannot but find an echo in the paternal heart of Your Holiness, always so profoundly solicitous for the spiritual needs of the children of the Church. The subjects for whose benefit a law is passed have always had — more than the right — the duty, if it should instead prove harmful, of asking the legislator with filial trust for its abrogation.

Therefore, we most earnestly beseech Your Holiness not to deprive us — at a time of such painful divisions and ever-increasing perils for the purity of the Faith and the unity of the Church, daily and sorrowfully echoed in the voice of our common Father — of the possibility of continuing to have recourse to the fruitful integrity of that *Missale Romanum* of St. Pius V, so highly praised by Your Holiness and so deeply venerated and loved by the whole Catholic world.

A. Card. Ottaviani
Card. Bacci

The Feast of St. Pius X

(emphasis added)

The Ottaviani Intervention

(The Letter of Cardinals Ottaviani and Bacci to Pope Paul VI)

Most Holy Father,

Having examined, and presented for the scrutiny of others, the *Novus Ordo Missæ* prepared by the experts of the *Consilium ad exsequendam Constitutionem de Sacra Liturgia*, and after lengthy reflection and prayer, we feel it **our duty in the sight of God and towards Your Holiness** to put forward the following considerations:

The accompanying critical study is the work of a group of theologians, liturgists and pastors of souls. Brief though it is, **it sufficiently demonstrates that the *Novus Ordo Missæ* — considering the new elements, susceptible of widely differing evaluations, which appear to be implied or taken for granted — represents, as a whole and in detail, a striking departure from the Catholic theology of the Holy Mass as it was formulated in Session XXII of the Council of Trent, which, by fixing definitively the ‘canons’ of the rite, erected an insurmountable barrier against any heresy which might attack the integrity of the Mystery.**

The pastoral reasons adduced in support of such a grave break — even if they could stand up in the face of doctrinal reasons — do not appear sufficient. **The innovations in the *Novus Ordo Missæ*, and on the other hand the things of eternal value relegated to an inferior place (if indeed they are still to be found at all), could well turn into a certainty the suspicion already prevalent, alas, in many circles, that...**

(Continued on inside back cover)